



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/829,597	04/09/2001	John C. Tang	0007056-0031/PS063/RSH	7956

32291 7590 07/01/2004

MARTINE & PENILLA, LLP
710 LAKEWAY DRIVE
SUITE 170
SUNNYVALE, CA 94085

EXAMINER

STEELMAN, MARY J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2122

DATE MAILED: 07/01/2004

6

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/829,597

Applicant(s)

TANG ET AL.

Examiner

Mary J. Steelman

Art Unit

2122

– The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address –
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 7/9/01, 4/7/03.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-48 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-48 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 April 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☒ Other: Accepted Drawings.

Art Unit: 2122

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-48 are pending.

Drawings

2. Drawings submitted 07/09/2001 are accepted by Examiner.

Specification

3. Page 11, line 2 recites, "are accessed within 5 minutes of each more than 4 times...", should be --are accessed within 5 minutes of each other more than 4 times....-- Add the word 'other'.

Claim Objections

4. Claims 15 and 31 recite, "...wherein said list sometimes hidden." This would be more clear if they were phrased, "...wherein said list may be hidden."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. The term "an appropriate amount" in claims 4, 20, and 36 is a relative term, which renders the claim indefinite. The term "an appropriate amount" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention.

7. The term "recently" in claims 13, 29, and 45 is a relative term, which renders the claim indefinite. The term "recently" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention.

Art Unit: 2122

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. Claims 1-6, 10-22, 26-38, and 42-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent 6,507,845 B1 to Cohen et al.

Per claims 1, 17, and 33:

-A method...a device...a computer program product...

(Col. 2, lines 52-54, "It is an object of the present invention to solve some of the problems described above with existing collaboration tools and systems." Col. 2, lines 64-66, "The above and other objects are achieved by a method implemented on a computer and corresponding software tool stored on a computer readable medium...")

-composing a list of one or more related items wherein said related items are related to a task by a metric;

(FIG. 3, Col. 3, lines 1-5, "The method involves the step of storing a first set of data representing a plurality of users involved in the task and a second set of data representing a plurality of data objects such as documents or database files involved in the task. The two sets of data representing users and data objects may be generated...", col. 6, lines 6-9, "...user establishes the tasks by creating a task object and associating it with a select number of documents involved in the task and a select number (metrics) of users to be involved in the task.")

Art Unit: 2122

-selecting said related item from said list.

(Col. 6, lines 12-13, "Referring to FIG. 3, at a user's request, the set of tasks is retrieved..." Col. 6, line 37, "If the user selects one of the tasks (select item from list of tasks)...")

Per claims 2, 18, and 34:

-said related items are computer objects.

(Col. 3, lines 5-6, "The two sets of data representing users and data objects (related items are objects) may be generated...")

Per claims 3, 19, and 35:

-determining whether a first computer object and a second computer object have a user in common.

(Col. 3, lines 11-14, "The method further involves receiving task-related data (user in common) representing activities performed by each of the plurality of users involved in the task on the plurality of data objects involved in the task.")

Per claims 4, 20, and 36:

-determining whether a first computer object and a second computer object have an appropriate amount of data in common.

Art Unit: 2122

(Col. 6, lines 18-20, “The UI program also checks whether any electronic notes are associated with the task...and, if so, associates a note indicator with the task (as an example, task and note are associated due to common data)...”)

Per claims 5, 21, and 37:

-determining whether a first computer object and a second computer object are accessed with a frequency by one or more users.

(Col. 3, lines 25-37, “...the method further involves displaying activity data in two separate windows or regions of a screen display simultaneously. A first region contains a list of the plurality of users in association with an activity performed by each of the users concurrently or most recently. The second region contains a list of the plurality of data objects in association with an activity performed upon each of the plurality of data objects concurrently or most recently. These two windows thus provide comprehensive awareness of the current or most recent activities performed by the users in the group (accessed with a frequency by one or more users) as well as the current or most recent activity performed upon each of the documents involved in the project or task.”)

Per claims 6, 22, and 38:

-determining whether a computer object was recently accessed.

(Col. 3, lines 30-33, “The second region contains a list of the plurality of data objects in association with an activity performed upon each of the plurality of data objects concurrently or most recently (computer object recently accessed).”)

Art Unit: 2122

Per claims 10, 26, and 42:

-said related items are users.

(Col. 6, line 15, "...whether any of the users associated with the tasks (related items are users) are active...", col. 6, lines 48-50, "When a task is selected, the UI program retrieves the set of usernames from the user profiles associated with the task...")

Per claims 11, 27, and 43:

-determining whether a user has accessed a computer object.

(Col. 4, lines 52-57, "The document objects contain application data as well as meta-data provided by the object management system to clients, such as information management system to clients, such as information tracking the history of the document. The user profiles are sets of usernames and related information regarding users who have access to the system...", col. 6, lines 62-65, "...the UI program retrieves the most recent activity if any performed on a document in the project associated with the user...which may be stored in the user profile, task object, or a separate task history data file", col. 7, lines 14-22, "...determines whether the document is currently in use...retrieves the username of the user working on the document (user has accessed) ...determines from the document meta-data or history data file, whether any activity has been performed on the document since its creation...retrieves the most recent activity performed on the document...")

Per claims 12, 28, and 44:

Art Unit: 2122

-determining whether a user is referenced in a computer object.

(Col. 4, line 58, "...tasks which each relate a number of user profiles (references a user) ...", col. 7, lines 4-8, "...tool bar is displayed...showing the list of users involved (reference a user) in the selected project, their active status, and what activity they are currently performing on a document in the task...")

Per claims 13, 29, and 45:

-determining whether a user was recently contacted.

(Col. 2, lines 61-63, "It is an object of the present invention to improve awareness of activities of a group of authors...", Col. 3, line 46, "...email...", col. 4, lines 34-37, "The server further contains two or more messaging systems...such as email or electronic notes..." Col. 4, lines 55-57, "The user profiles are sets of usernames and related information (contact information) regarding users who have access to the system.")

Per claims 14, 30, and 46:

-said list is displayed continuously.

FIGs. 4-5, Col. 6, lines 35-40, "If the user selects one of the tasks...the tool bar UI generates two windows...displays graphical indicators of the set of documents...displays a list of the set of users...")

Per claims 15, 31, and 47:

-said list sometimes hidden.

Art Unit: 2122

(Windows may selectively be closed. Note the “close window” icon at the top right corner of the screen shots. See FIGs. 12-27. Closing / hiding a window is well known in the art.)

Per claims 16, 32, and 48:

-status of said related items is displayed.

(Col. 3, lines 33-37, “These two windows thus provide comprehensive awareness of the current of most recent activities performed by the users in the group as well as the current or most recent activity performed upon each of the documents involved in the project or task”, col. 5, lines 7-15, “...tool bar UI program retrieves data from the task, document and user objects to produce a unique user interface simultaneously displaying tool bars, one showing the status of users and the other status of documents...”, col. 5, lines 40-43, “...tool bar user interface layer, which consists of objects representing the views of user and document status...”, col. 6, lines 22-24, “...the UI program displays a list of the tasks, by name or other identifier, along with the active and note indicator (status of related items)...”)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 2122

10. Claims 7-9, 23-25, 39-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 6,507,845 to Cohen et al., and further in view of US Patent 6,678,882 B1 to Hurley et al.

Cohen's invention disclosed "awareness of the status of a task, and...improving collaboration among users involved in a task. Cohen disclosed a document history file (col. 8, lines 17-38). "The client may select any of the document history activity entries...in which case the version of the document resulting from the selected activity is retrieved and displayed...This therefore allows user to identify which version of a document they are working with to facilitate collaborative review of the document." While Cohen disclosed versioning, he failed to disclose specifics, such as whether the object is a copy of another object, whether an object is produced from a template, whether multiple objects were produced from a template.

Cohen failed to disclose:

Per claims 7, 23, and 39:

-determining whether a first computer object is a copy of a second computer object.

However, Hurley disclosed a collaboration model, including a (col. 7, lines 53-54) "replication submodel arranged to define a manner in which multiple versions of objects (copies of objects) are represented." Col. 8, lines 10-13, Situations that do call for replication include any situation involving distribution of shared objects or any situation involving complex collaboration..." Col. 9, lines 9-11, "A replication model provides replication functionality, and defines how multiple versions of an object are represented..." The replication submodel handles details regarding copied objects.

Therefore, it would have been obvious, to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to have modified Cohen's invention regarding collaboration and tasks to include more details of versioning and object copying, as disclosed by Hurley, because both inventions are directed to collaborative programming using shared objects. (Cohen, col. 1, lines 53-56), "Tools to support awareness and the availability of people and documents, ad hoc workflow, document history monitoring, and synchronous and asynchronous collaboration all are critical to successful collaboration on documents." Tools that handle multiple versions / copies of objects enhance the overall organization of the system.

Cohen failed to disclose:

Per claims 8, 24, and 40:

-determining whether a first computer object is a template and a second computer object was produced from said first computer object.

However, Hurley disclosed a collaboration model, including a (col. 7, lines 53-54) "replication submodel arranged to define a manner in which multiple versions of objects (copies of objects) are represented." Col. 8, lines 10-13, Situations that do call for replication include any situation involving distribution of shared objects or any situation involving complex collaboration..." Col. 9, lines 9-11, "A replication model provides replication functionality, and defines how multiple versions of an object are represented..." Replication can be accomplished through a template. In fact, object oriented programming is based on a hierarchy of objects and derived objects, whereby the parent object is a template for a child object.

Therefore, it would have been obvious, to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to have modified Cohen's invention regarding collaboration and tasks to include

Art Unit: 2122

more details of versioning and object copying, as disclosed by Hurley, because both inventions are directed to collaborative programming using shared objects. (Cohen, col. 1, lines 53-56), “Tools to support awareness and the availability of people and documents, ad hoc workflow, document history monitoring, and synchronous and asynchronous collaboration all are critical to successful collaboration on documents.” Tools that handle multiple versions and derived templated objects enhance the overall organization of the system.

Cohen failed to disclose:

Per claims 9, 25, and 41:

-determining whether a first computer object and a second computer object are both produced from a template.

However, Hurley disclosed a collaboration model, including a (col. 7, lines 53-54) “replication submodel arranged to define a manner in which multiple versions of objects (copies of objects) are represented.” Col. 8, lines 10-13, Situations that do call for replication include any situation involving distribution of shared objects or any situation involving complex collaboration...” Col. 9, lines 9-11, “A replication model provides replication functionality, and defines how multiple versions of an object are represented...” Replication can be accomplished through a template. In fact, object oriented programming is based on a hierarchy of objects and derived objects, whereby the parent object is a template for a child object.

Therefore, it would have been obvious, to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to have modified Cohen’s invention regarding collaboration and tasks to include more details of versioning and object copying, as disclosed by Hurley, because both inventions

Art Unit: 2122

are directed to collaborative programming using shared objects. (Cohen, col. 1, lines 53-56), "Tools to support awareness and the availability of people and documents, ad hoc workflow, document history monitoring, and synchronous and asynchronous collaboration all are critical to successful collaboration on documents." Tools that handle multiple versions and derived templated objects enhance the overall organization of the system.

Conclusion

11. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mary Steelman, whose telephone number is (703) 305-4564. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tuan Dam can be reached on (703) 305-4552.

The fax phone number is (703) 872-9306 for regular communications and for After Final communications. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

Mary Steelman



06/23/2004



**TUAN DAM
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**

Accepted by Examiner 6-17-04 MS

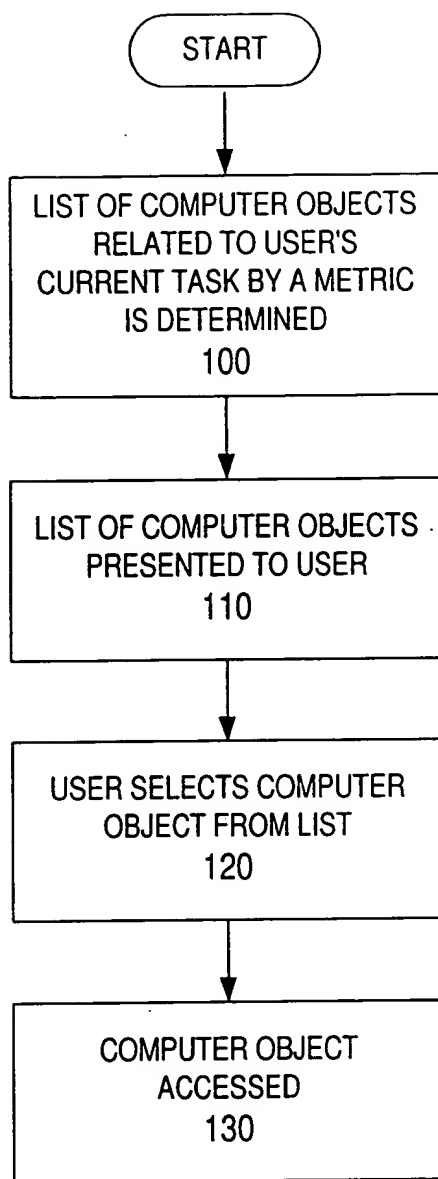


FIGURE 1

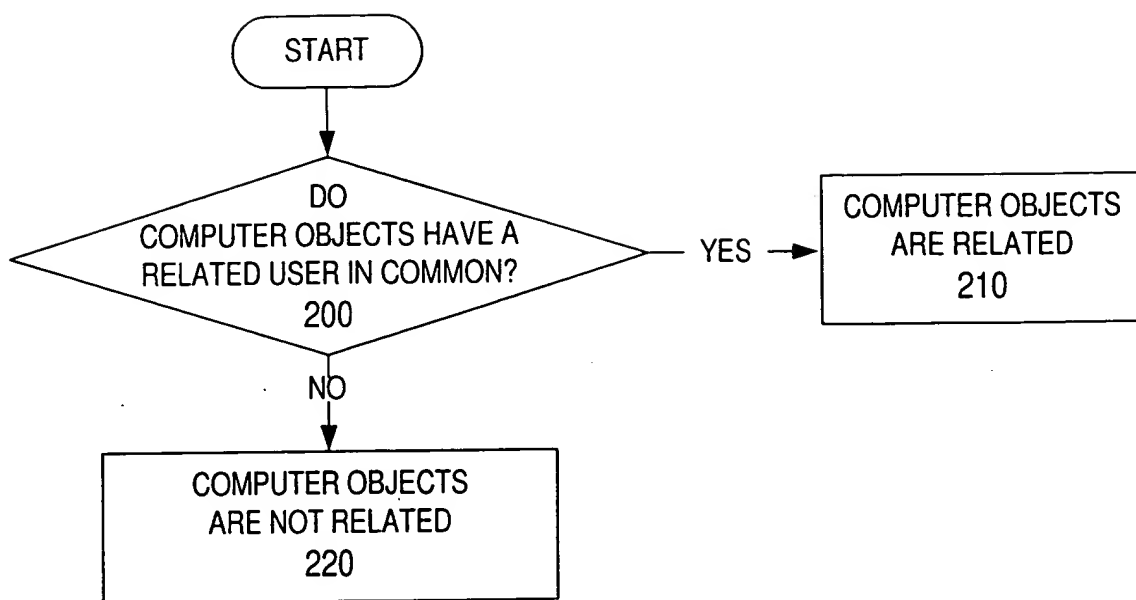


FIGURE 2

Accepted by Examiner
6.17.04 MS

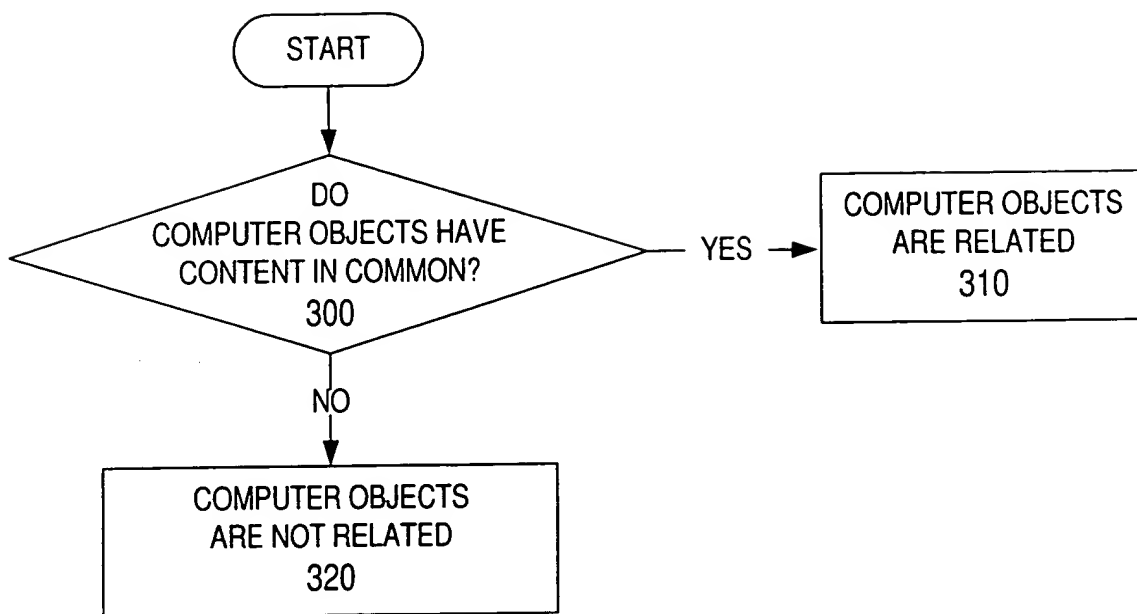


FIGURE 3

6.17.04 MS

Accepted by Examiner 6-17-04 MS

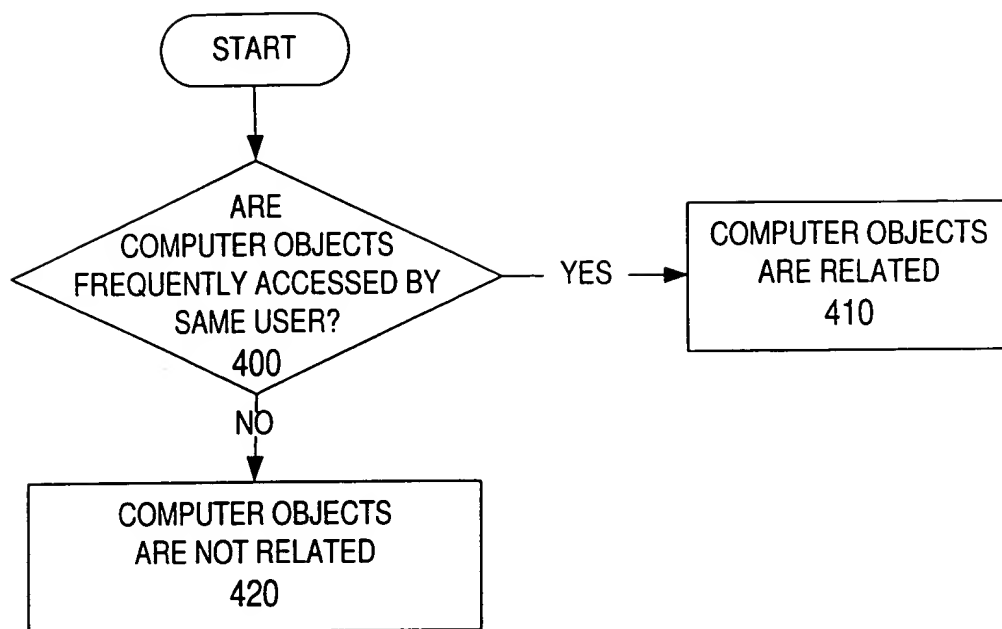


FIGURE 4

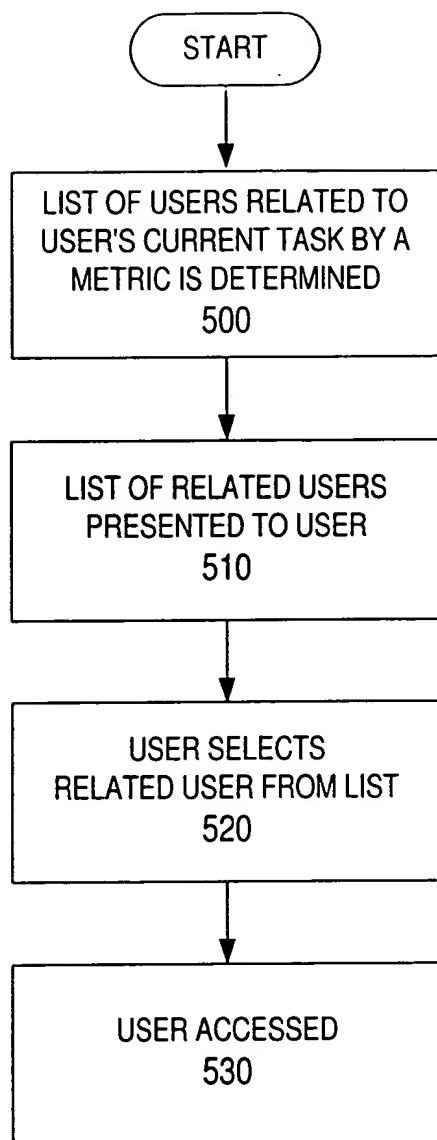


FIGURE 5

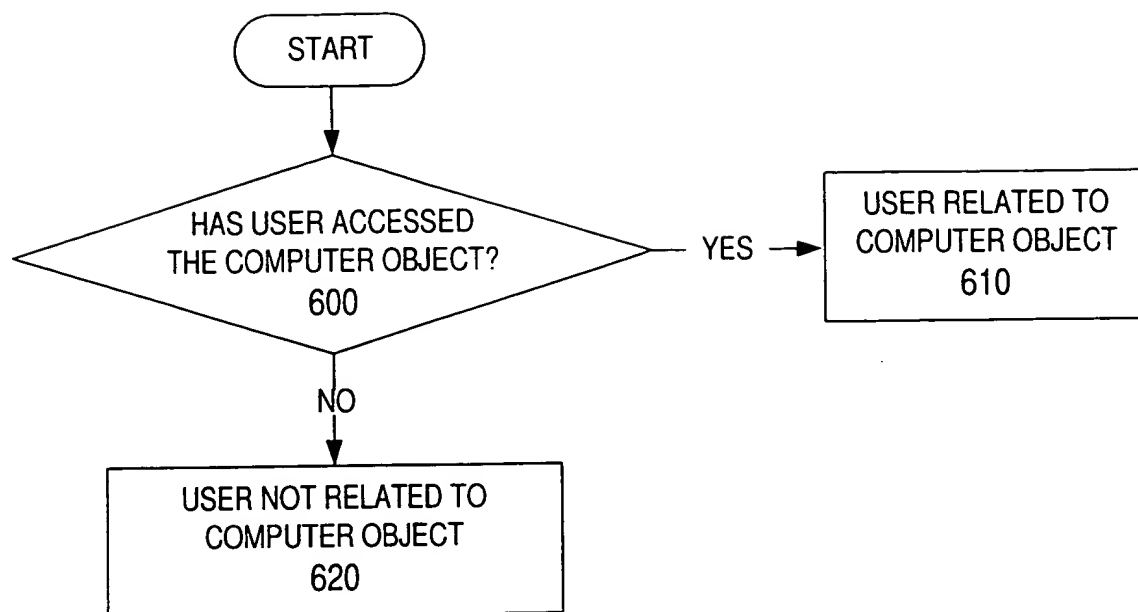


FIGURE 6

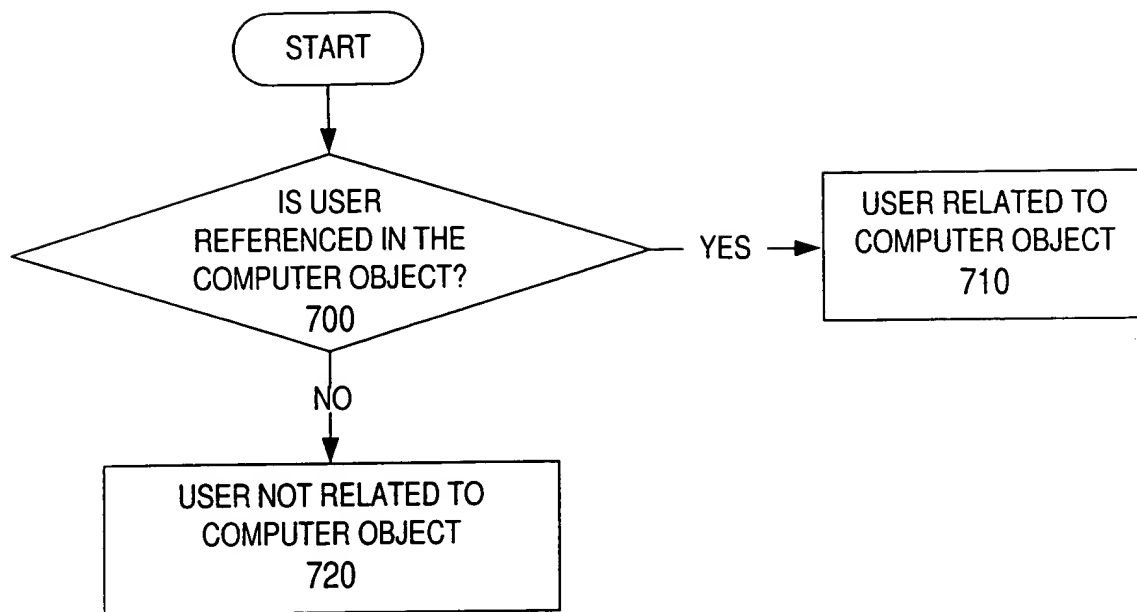


FIGURE 7

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

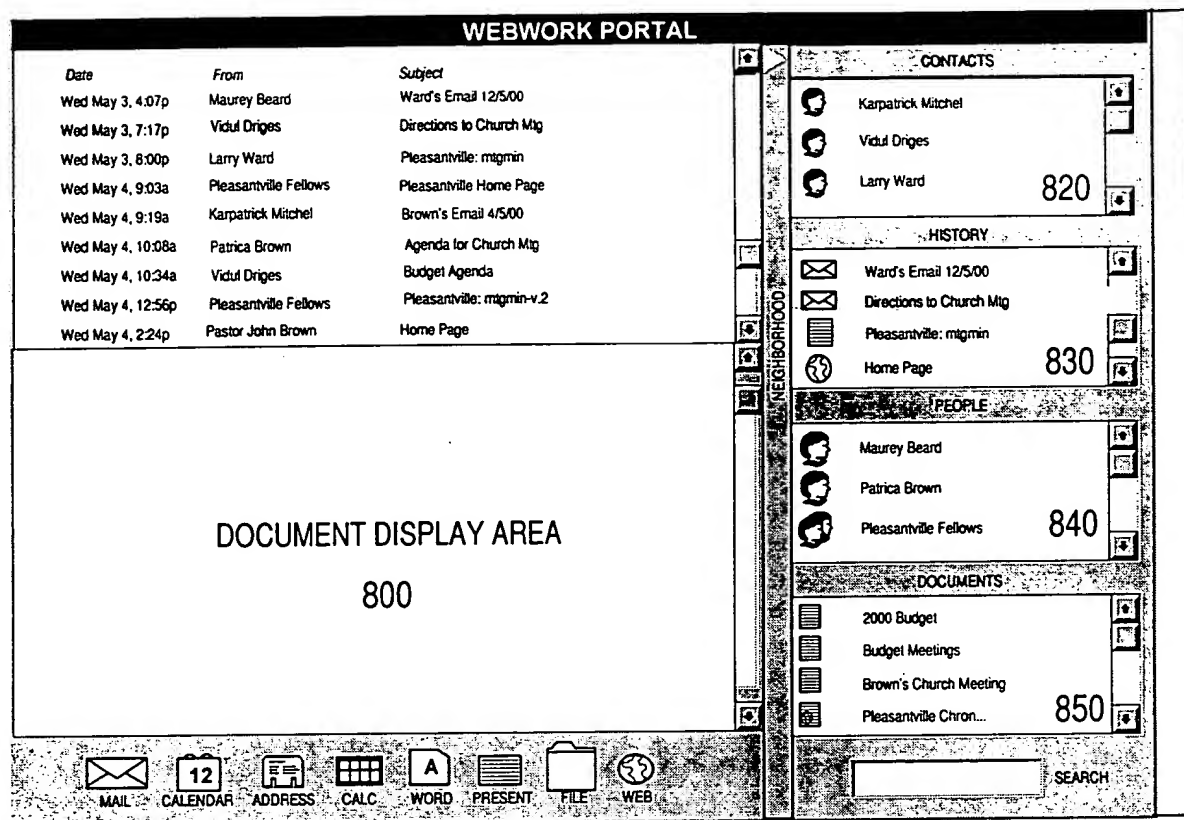


FIGURE 8

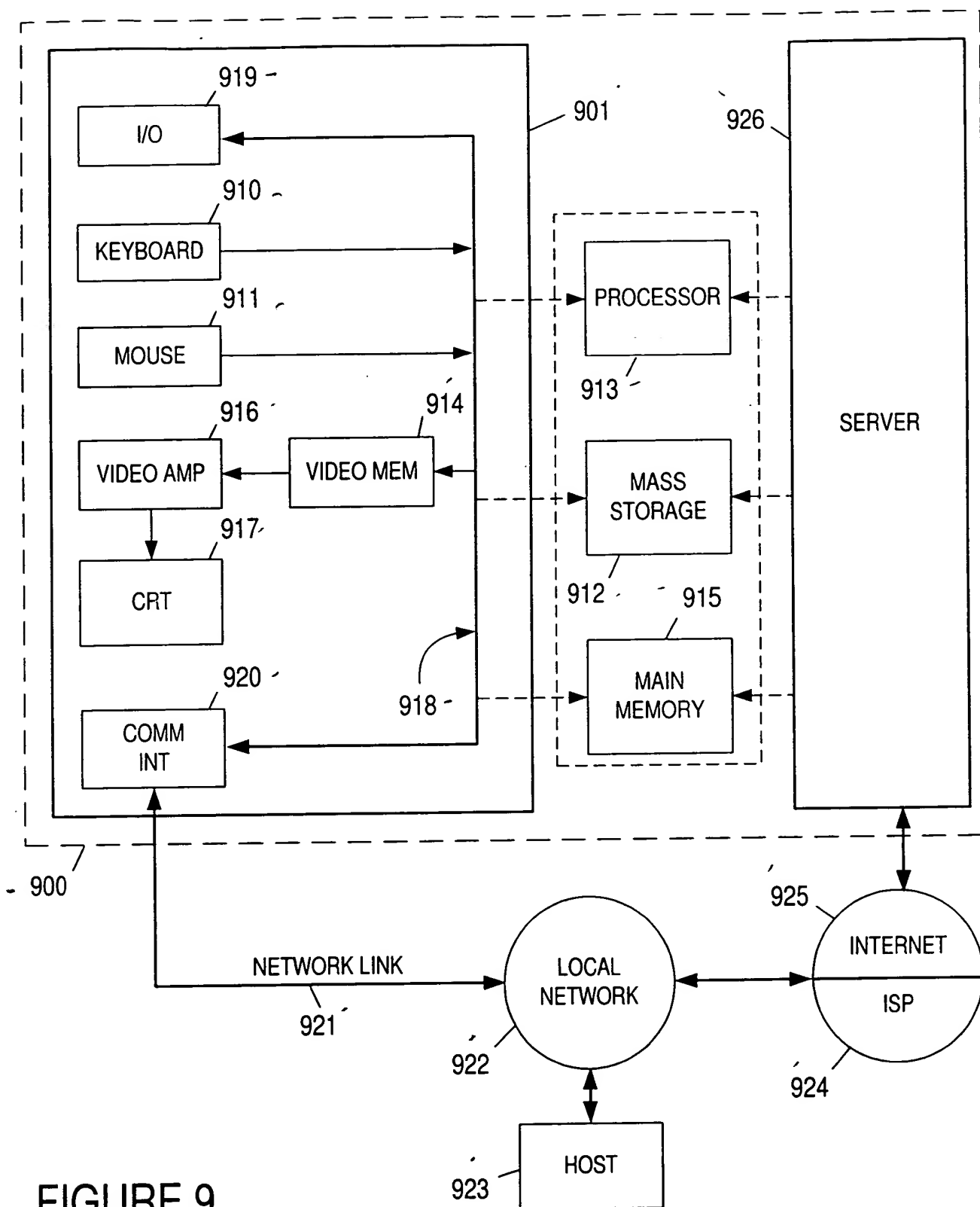


FIGURE 9